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The annual report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Borough of Colchester, for the year 1894, makes a rather belated appearance, but that fact is compensated for by its inspiriting and encouraging nature. A great deal of money has been disbursed in Colchester during the last quarter of a century, with a view to making the Borough up to date in point of cleanliness and sanitary science. We are not prepared to assert that all that money has been spent with infallible wisdom and absolute economy. Infallibility is not possible in public administration any more than in private enterprises and the conduct of private businesses. But it is, on the whole, a satisfactory circumstance, which must be regarded as a good deal more than an accidental coincidence, that the expenditure in question has been accompanied by a steady improvement in the health of the town and a decline in the death rate, most remarkable and indeed almost phenomenal. The death-rate for 1894, assuming the population to be still no larger than in 1891, and including the deaths of non-residents, is only 13·6 per 1,000. The estimated population of the Borough is, however, 36,414, and a certain proportion of the deaths recorded did not properly belong to Colchester at all, so that Dr. BROWN calculates the actual Borough death-rate for 1894 to be only 12·66 per 1,000. From 1841 to 1850 the average annual death-rate for Colchester was about 24 per 1,000; from 1881 to 1890, it was about 19 per 1,000. To give a better notion of what the difference means, it may be concisely stated that there are now in Colchester 230 people, alive and going about their daily occupations, who, if the death-roll had been at the rate prevailing in Colchester between 1841 and 1850, would have been deposited in the Colchester Cemetery during the year 1894.

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Colchester has a sanitary record which compares favourably with that of any like borough in the United Kingdom. This low death-rate is not the only remarkable and satisfactory item in Dr. BROWN'S report. The notifications of infectious diseases were 448 less in 1894 than in 1893; many improvements in sanitary administration were effected during the year, including the drainage of Old Health, though not in time to prevent ten cases of typhoid and diphtheria in that district, four or them fatal; other districts of the borough have also been properly drained during the year; the water supply of Colchester was considerably improved, and, as will be seen by reference to the statistics given by Dr. BROWN at the conclusion of his report, an enormous amount of sanitary work was accomplished, day by day and week by week, by the officers and employees of the Colchester Corporation.

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